

Message Text

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22

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-07

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R 131525Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6016

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 995

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJ: RETURNEE SECRETARIAT OCCUPIED

REF: 75 LISBON 7583 (DTG 221520Z DEC 75)

SUMMARY: OFFICES OF SECRETARY OF STATE FOR RETURNEES WERE
OCCUPIED FEB 12 BY RETURNEES DEMANDING HIS RESIGNATION.
FOLLOWING SUBSEQUENT MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER, RETURNEES
ANNOUNCED PROGRESS ON SOME DEMANDS. INCIDENT DEMONSTRATES
INCREASING BITTERNESS TOWARD GOVERNMENT WHICH
THEY PERCEIVE AS UNRESPONSIVE, BUT WHICH LACKS MEANS TO
REDRESS RETURNEES' GRIEVANCES. END SUMMARY.

1. FOLLOWING FEB 12 LISBON RALLY, RETURNEES FROM PORTUGAL'S
FORMER AFRICAN COLONIES OCCUPIED OFFICES OF SECRETARY
OF STATE FOR RETURNEES AMANDIO AZEVEDO. AS CROWD OF
5,000 PEOPLE DEMANDING AZEVEDO'S RESIGNATION DEMONSTRATED
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OUTSIDE, APPROXIMATELY 200 TOOK OVER BUILDING

AND FORCED SECRETARY TO MEET WITH AD HOC NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE.
AT ONE POINT, WHEN IT WAS REPORTED THAT POLICE WERE DISPERSING
DEMONSTRATORS OUTSIDE BY FORCE, AZEVEDO WAS ROUGHED UP.
CROWD FINALLY DISPERSED AFTER SECRETARY ARRANGED MEETING
BETWEEN AD HOC COMMITTEE AND PRIME MINISTER PINHEIRO
DE AZEVEDO.

2. FOLLOWING MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER, ALSO ATTENDED
BY SOCIAL AFFAIRS MINISTER RUI MACHETE, RETURNEE SECRETARY'S
BOSS, RETURNEE SPOKESMAN ANNOUNCED GOVERNMENT HAD AGREED
TO: STUDY DEMANDS AT FEB 13 COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
MEETING; RENAME RETURNEE SECRETARIAT "SECRETARIAT OF
STATE FOR REFUGEES"; AND PERMIT RETURNEES TO SELL PRIVATE
AUTOMOBILES BROUGHT FROM COLONIES IMMEDIATELY RATHER THAN
AFTER TWO YEARS REQUIRED BY LAW.

3. COMMENT: FEB 12 INCIDENTS DEMONSTRATE INCREASING
DESPERATION AND BITTERNESS OF RETURNEES; ESPECIALLY
THOSE IN URBAN AREAS, WHO HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO FIND EMPLOY-
MENT AND RESUME A NORMAL LIFE. THEIR RANCOR IS INCREAS-
INGLY BEING DIRECTED AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT, WHICH THEY
SEE AS UNRESPONSIVE. TO SOME DEGREE, THIS PERCEPTION
IS JUSTIFIED; FROM THE BEGINNING, THE
RETURNEE RELIEF PROGRAM HAS BEEN CHARACTERIZED BY GENERAL
INEFFICIENCY (REFTEL). DECEMBER PPD SPLIT RESULTING IN
REPLACEMENT OF MINISTER OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND SECRETARY
OF STATE FOR RETURNEES HAS NOT HELPED MATTERS. EVEN
UNDER THE BEST OF CIRCUMSTANCES, HOWEVER, THE GOVERNMENT
LACKS THE WHEREWITHAL ADEQUATELY TO REDRESS RETURNEE
GRIEVANCES.
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